

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A method of shielding a condenser fan motor from contaminants, the condenser fan motor including a housing and an output shaft, said method utilizing a dust shield including a shroud, a center opening through the shroud, and a hub extending around a perimeter of the opening, wherein the hub includes an opening extension and a ~~spring member coupled to~~ plurality of spring members extending from the opening extension, said method comprising:

fitting the opening of the shroud over the output shaft;

inserting the output shaft through the opening;

engaging the hub to the output shaft, wherein ~~[[the]]~~ at least one of said spring member members is outwardly displaced as the hub receives the output shaft thereby forming an interference fit between the hub and the output shaft; and

positioning the dust shield adjacent the housing such that the shroud defines an enclosure to encompass a part of the housing to prevent contaminants from reaching a portion of the output shaft adjacent the housing.

2. (previously presented) A method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein the hub is tapered toward a center of the opening, said step of engaging the hub to the output shaft comprising the step of stretching the hub around the output shaft.

3. (original) A method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein the hub includes at least one slot separating a portion of the hub, said method of inserting the output shaft through the opening comprising the step of enlarging the at least one slot with the output shaft.

4. (currently amended) A condenser fan motor dust shield for shielding a condenser fan motor from contaminants wherein the condenser fan motor has an output shaft, said condenser fan motor dust shield comprising:

a shroud;

a central opening through said shroud and configured to receive the output shaft; and

a hub extending from said shroud and adapted to obstruct at least a portion of said central opening, said hub comprising an opening extension and a ~~spring member~~ plurality of spring members coupled to said opening extension, each of said spring members separated by an expansion slot, wherein at least one of said spring ~~member~~ members is outwardly displaced when the output shaft is received in said central opening.

5. (original) A condenser fan motor dust shield in accordance with Claim 4 wherein said hub is tapered toward a center of said opening.

6. (original) A condenser fan motor dust shield in accordance with Claim 4 wherein said hub further comprises at least one slot.

7. (canceled)

8. (original) A condenser fan motor dust shield in accordance with Claim 4 wherein said shroud and said hub are integrally molded.

9. (previously presented) A condenser fan motor dust shield in accordance with Claim 4 wherein said shroud comprises a flat cover and a cylindrical extension extending from an outer perimeter of said cover.

10. (previously presented) A condenser fan motor dust shield in accordance with Claim 9 wherein said opening and said cylindrical extension coincide along a longitudinal axis.

11. (currently amended) A shielded condenser fan motor assembly comprising:

a motor comprising a housing and an output shaft; and

a dust shield attached to said shaft, said dust shield comprising a shroud, and a hub extending from said shroud, said hub comprising an opening extension and a ~~spring member~~ coupled to plurality of spring members extending from said opening extension, at least one of said spring ~~member~~ members outwardly displaced around said output shaft, wherein said shroud forms an enclosure which encloses an area of said housing and said shaft.

12. (original) A shielded condenser fan motor assembly in accordance with Claim 11 wherein said hub comprises at least one slot.

13. (original) A shielded condenser fan motor assembly in accordance with Claim 11 wherein said shroud comprises a center opening, and said hub is tapered so as to obstruct said opening for press fit connection to said shaft.

14. (previously presented) A shielded condenser fan motor assembly in accordance with Claim 11 wherein said shroud comprises a cover portion and a cylindrical portion extending from said cover portion.

15. (canceled)

16. (previously presented) A shielded condenser fan motor assembly in accordance with Claim 15 wherein said spring members are separated by a plurality of expansion slots.

17. (previously presented) A shielded condenser fan motor assembly in accordance with Claim 11 wherein said hub comprises a transition portion having a frustoconical cross section such that said hub is friction fit onto said output shaft as said dust shield is mounted to said output shaft.

18. (currently amended) A shielded condenser fan motor assembly in accordance with Claim 11 wherein said ~~hub comprises a plurality of spring members~~ are configured to exert a force on the output shaft, thereby engaging said hub to the output shaft and holding the dust shield in place.